

Untitled document

October 3, 2012

WASHINGTON – Congressman Charles F. Bass (NH-02) today expressed serious concerns about the Obama Administration circumventing Congress to purchase the Thomson Correctional Center in Illinois, which would divert funding for the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) and could impact BOP's activation of four new federal prisons, including the new prison in Berlin.

Bass said:

"President Obama's move to circumvent Congress and purchase the Thomson prison in Illinois is disconcerting. His actions prove he is more interested in scoring political points than abiding by the will of Congress, which rescinded funding for this project last year. While I understand the Administration believes this move is expected to allow for the activation of the new Berlin Prison, we must recognize that there is a limited pool of funds and Congress has already spoken on the proper funding amounts for the activation and operation of the four brand-new federal prisons in Berlin, Alabama, Mississippi, and West Virginia.

"We've come a long way in getting the necessary authorization and funding for the new prison in Berlin, which will be a tremendous economic boon to the North Country and provide hundreds of new jobs. I will continue to do everything I can to ensure the Administration does not put this new prison in jeopardy."

Bass sent a [letter to Attorney General Eric Holder](#) in early August expressing concerns about the Administration's proposal to purchase the Thomson Correctional Center and the potential negative impact it would have on funding for the activation of the new federal prison in Berlin.

Bass has long worked for the opening the federal prison in Berlin. Last year, he worked with the House Appropriations Committee to help author the language prioritizing funding for federal prisons that had been constructed but not yet activated, such as the Berlin Prison, which was included in the bill. The Senate Appropriations Committee later included similar language in their version of the bill. Bass continued to work with his colleagues to ensure the prioritization language was included in the final conference report, which Congress passed last November.

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